

MEMORANDUM

TO: Marine Fisheries Commission

FROM: Louis Daniel

SUBJECT: Stock Status Report

DATE: June 22, 2006

Attached is the Division of Marine Fisheries 2006 Stock Status Report (2006 SSR) with the changes from last year outlined below. The report is an annual and intended to serve as a general barometer of the overall health of our fishery resources and is used to prioritize the development of Fishery Management Plans (FMP) and updates to those plans.

Striped mullet were upgraded from Recovering to Viable. Overfishing is not occurring in striped mullet and 2005 landings were within the range permitted by the recently adopted FMP. Striped mullet meet the criteria for a viable stock, however, some concerns still remain related to expansion of the age structure of the population.

Weakfish were changed from Overfished to Concern based on the results of the 2006 peer-review of the most recent ASMFC stock assessment. The assessment was rejected by the peer-review. Therefore, there is no accepted assessment with which to base an overfished designation. Weakfish continue to be a special species to watch with significant declines in the commercial landings over the last several years. The ASMFC Weakfish Management Board has directed the technical committee to address the concerns with the assessment and will be considering measures to address these declining trends at their August 2006 meeting.

A technical correction was necessary for the white perch stock status. The actual status report indicates white perch are Unknown while the table on the web site incorrectly indicated Concern. The correct stock status for white perch is Unknown and the table has been corrected to reflect that change.

Dolphin/Wahoo was changed to Dolphin. The current report only addresses dolphin. It is our intent to add a wahoo stock status report in the 2007 report.

Species to watch in 2006-2007 include those species that have NC FMPs being developed (Kingfishes, Bay Scallops) and revised (red drum and river herring) as well as those species with upcoming amendments likely through the Federal Councils or ASMFC (Snapper-Grouper, Gag, Weakfish, King Mackerel, Coastal Sharks).